Good readers automatically use strategies before, during and after we read. Teaching strategies and when to use them can improve reading.

**Pre-reading**: Skim for the T G C – titles, captions, graphics (activates prior knowledge)

**During reading**: CLICKS AND CLUNKS

If it makes sense, the reading is clicking. If it isn’t making sense, they’ve hit a clunk.

There are four fix up strategies to use when learners hit a clunk:

1. Re-read the sentence looking for ideas to help understand the word.
2. Re-read the sentence before and read ahead to the sentence following looking for ideas to help.
3. Look for a prefix or suffix in the word
4. Break the word into parts to see if there are recognisable parts.

Clicks and Clunks also teaches learners to monitor their comprehension. Research indicates that poor readers are often unaware that they do not accurately comprehend the written material. By monitoring comprehension – identifying the clunks – students become aware of when to use fix-up strategies.

These strategies are based on the research completed by Collins and Smith (1980, cited in Horrex, 1992, p11)

**After reading**: LOOK BACK (Garner, at al, 1984 cited in Pressley, Johnson, Symons, McGoldrick and Kurita, 1989)

Learners skim back through the text to find the answer by first of all locating a word from the question in the text (the ‘key word’ skimming method is advocated by Sanford, Bishop, Gillespie & Crosby, 1973, cited in Horrex, 1992, p 15).

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Research shows that learners who possess strategies may not use them if they don’t think them worthwhile. “Student motivation often plays a critical factor in whether and when strategies are used” (Pressley & McCormick, 1995, p 242). A learner won’t use a strategy if he/she does not like it or he/she thinks it will not work – that is, thinks using it won’t have any effect on the final outcome or product. Learners need to see for themselves that using the strategy works. They need to attribute their success to the strategy and not luck or chance (**attributional training/re-training**).

How do we do this?

Ask the learners what they did to get that answer – so they talk through the strategy and you praise use of the strategy and point out that it works (**attributional training/re-training).**

Eg

“What did you do to get so many questions right?”

“I looked back in the story for the answer.”

“That’s a good strategy to use because you can’t remember everything you read and it works.”

Horrex, J. (1992). A multicomponential intervention programme for remediating secondary students’ reading comprehension difficulties. Palmerston North: Massey University.

Pressley, M., Johnson, C.J., Symons, S., McGoldrick, J.A., & Kurita, J.A. (1989). Strategies that improve children’s memory and comprehension of text. *Elementary School Journal, 90,* 3-32.

Pressley, M., & McCormick, C. (1995). Cognition, teaching, and assessment. New York: HarperCollins.